

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2001

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to join my distinguished colleagues, Senators LUGAR, LEAHY, HARKIN, DURBIN, and others, as well as Representative JO ANN EMERSON and Representative JIM MCGOVERN in the House, to speak in favor of the International Food For Education and Nutrition Act of 2001.

Mr. President, former Senators Bob Dole and Senator George McGovern developed the concept of this bipartisan bill last year. This legislation, which links food to education, is really brilliant in its simplicity, by making permanent an existing international school nutrition pilot program.

These two dedicated public servants, Senator Dole and Senator McGovern, worked tirelessly in the Senate in years past to feed needy children both in this country and around the world. Because of them and because of their leadership and their vision, millions and millions of children have received nutritious meals and an education. Through their efforts, they have given millions of children hope and a future.

Mr. President, nearly 30 years ago, on this Senate floor, Senator Bob Dole and Senator George McGovern formed a bipartisan coalition on matters that had to do with agriculture and domestic food assistance. They led the way in putting in place an expanded network of food stamps for the poor, school lunches and breakfast on a much wider scale, a supplementary feeding program for low-income pregnant and nursing mothers and their infants, and nutrition guidelines for the American people.

Indeed, Senators Dole and McGovern, through their words and their deeds, have demonstrated a deep and enduring commitment to children around the globe.

But there is still more to do—much more. Today, we still cannot understate the importance of school feeding programs in impoverished countries throughout this world. Currently, there are hundreds of millions of children worldwide who are not enrolled in school, in part because of hunger or malnourishment. We know if there is food at school, children will come, children will attend. The fact is that

school feeding programs can reach the poorest of the poor, providing necessary nutrition to children who often do not receive any other food throughout the entire day.

As a result, these programs have had a substantial and very positive impact on school enrollment levels and attendance. More and more children are going to school around the world, and more and more children are able to learn and become educated. With an education, a child has a future.

There is a very simplistic and important link between food and education. My wife, Fran, and I have seen it in our travels to Haiti. We have become good friends with Father Hagan—Tom Hagan—an American priest who works so very hard with the poorest of the poor in Haiti. One of the things that Father Hagan does, and is doing today, is making that link between food and education.

Father Tom waits until after the school year starts and he sees what children don't have the money, don't have the ability to enroll in school. He waits a couple weeks and then he opens up his school and takes those children in from the city of Port au Prince, the Cite Soleil, the poorest part of the city, the slum, and provides them with education. He not only provides them with education, he provides them with what for most of them is the only meal they will receive, the only food they will receive all day. So the food serves as sort of a magnet, but, at the same time, it gives these young children the nourishment they need so they can concentrate and study and they can learn.

Fran and I have seen it firsthand in Haiti. We have seen it in Nicaragua, we have seen it in other countries where people are working to make a difference.

What this bill does is put the Congress and this country on record as saying we are committed to doing this around the world. We want to work with other countries and the United States to lead by example. We cannot do this all ourselves, but we can provide the initial leadership.

The specific initiative we are introducing today advances and expands current feeding programs by establishing the International Food for Education and Nutrition Program. This new program will enable the U.S. Department of Agriculture to use funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation to purchase U.S. agricultural commodities for use in global school feeding programs. These commodities then would be provided to private organizations for distribution in recipient countries throughout the world.

To facilitate enactment of these programs, our bill also would provide adequate funds for transportation and distribution costs associated with these efforts. It does no good to give food if you cannot get it distributed.

Our legislation stems from the 1-year pilot program I referenced a moment ago which Senators Dole and McGovern developed and the previous administration launched a year ago. Known as the Global Food for Education Initiative, this \$300 million pilot program provides nutritious meals to children in 38 countries.

Under the program, 14 private volunteer organizations, together with the United Nations World Food Program, are working to provide a free breakfast or free lunch to some 7 million schoolchildren in developing countries. Our legislation is a perfect complement to the current Public Law 480 title II emergency feeding program which helps nourish more than 40 million children and adults worldwide.

Let me highlight just one of the many success stories we have already seen with the current pilot program.

In Cameroon, for example, we are providing nutritious meals to more than 50,000 schoolchildren, helping to increase school enrollment by over 50 percent and cutting the dropout rate for girls to virtually zero. These findings are not unique. We find, for example, similar success stories in Vietnam and in Honduras.

Our bill will continue to build upon the initial success of the pilot project, and we will make this program permanent. By making it permanent, we can reach even more impoverished children and have a lasting, long-term effect on global educational development and work to eradicate childhood hunger.

Furthermore, the investment in international school feeding programs not only will help children in developing countries, but it also will, of course, benefit our U.S. farmers. The program provides our farmers with a steady opportunity to sell the goods they produce. This is definitely a win-win situation.

I look forward to continuing our work on this important initiative, and I urge my colleagues to join in support of our legislation.

JAMES BOATWRIGHT, A VALUED SENATE EMPLOYEE

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I take a moment on the Senate floor to state my sadness—and I am sure the sadness of many Senators—on the death of James Boatwright.

For all the years I have served in the Senate, James has worked in the Senate restaurant. He has been a friend of mine and to many of us. He has kept us informed and entertained with his stories about his golf game, his insights about life, and sports in general. He was a very real and valuable part of the Senate and he will be missed by all of us who knew him.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BINGAMAN. I yield.

Mr. REID. I thank the Senator from New Mexico.